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**THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
FOR THE DISTRICT OF ALASKA**

NORTHERN DYNASTY  
MINERALS LTD. and PEBBLE  
LIMITED PARTNERSHIP,

Plaintiffs,

v.

U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL  
PROTECTION AGENCY

Defendant.

Case No. 3:24-cv-00059-SLG

**DECLARATION OF JESSIE RITTER**

I, Jessie Ritter, hereby declare:

1. My name is Jessie Ritter, and I live in Apex, North Carolina.

2. I make this declaration in support of National Wildlife Federation's Motion to Intervene in the above-captioned litigation. I know these facts of my own personal knowledge and would competently testify to them if called as a witness in these proceedings.

3. I work for the National Wildlife Federation ("NWF"), serving as the Associate Vice President of Water and Coasts at the organization's office in Washington, DC. In this capacity, I guide the NWF's advocacy efforts related to the protection of water quality and habitat in important riverine and estuarine ecosystems around the nation.

4. NWF is the nation's largest member-supported nonprofit conservation advocacy and education organization. NWF has more than six million members, partners, and supporters nationwide, as well as affiliate organizations in fifty-two states and territories, including the Southeast Alaska Conservation Council. NWF is headquartered in Reston, Virginia, with field offices throughout the United States.

5. The mission of NWF is to educate, mobilize, and advocate for preserving and strengthening protection for wildlife and wild places. A major concern of NWF is the protection of water resources and wildlife habitat. Since its founding in 1936, NWF has been advocating for the protection of vital resources, such as wetlands, streams, and rivers, upon which wildlife depends.

6. The Bristol Bay watershed provides one of the last remaining major runs of salmon that resemble the scale of historic salmon migrations before many aquatic systems were negatively impacted, as well as a wealth of habitat for bears, beavers, wolves, eagles, and other wildlife treasured by our members.

7. Because protecting water resources is fundamental to NWF's mission, NWF has spent the past decade plus working on behalf of its members and affiliates to oppose mining of the Pebble deposit in Bristol Bay, Alaska. The proposed Pebble Mine or any similar project would destroy more than 9,000 acres from the project footprint alone, destroy and damage more than 4,500 acres of pristine wetlands and 81 miles of untouched streams, and damage more than 20 acres of Endangered Species Act-designated critical habitat. These impacts would be devastating to fish, wildlife, water quality, and natural resources that are central to the interests of NWF and its members.

8. NWF has worked to protect the Bristol Bay watershed for over ten years because of its unique and outstanding aquatic and other habitat and recreational value as well as its economic and cultural value to Indigenous people and communities. NWF's efforts have included participation in multiple stages of the Pebble Mine project, including filing comments and other advocacy in connection with U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) 404(c) decisionmaking and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers permitting process and associated NEPA review. NWF has encouraged our members, supporters, and state affiliates to submit thousands of individual and

organizational comments opposing the Pebble Mine project and supporting the preservation of Bristol Bay and its abundant natural resources, and we have regularly reported to NWF members about our efforts to ensure these resources are fully protected under the law.

9. NWF supports the EPA's Final Determination under Section 404(c) of the Clean Water Act. This decision prevents a staggering amount of harm to the ecological integrity of the pristine Bristol Bay watershed.

10. NWF has many active members who have taken action to protect the Bristol Bay region from the harmful impacts of the Pebble Mine project. These members use and enjoy streams, wetlands, and wildlife that will be at risk of pollution, destruction, or degradation if EPA's 404(c) Final Determination is overturned or weakened.

11. The plaintiffs in this litigation seek to reverse EPA's important decision protecting the Bristol Bay region, and this would severely harm the interests of NWF and its members.

12. NWF and its members are not adequately represented by EPA in this lawsuit. While we support EPA's Final Determination, we can only be sure that our interests are protected by participating in the lawsuit as a party. EPA has changed course before, as in 2017 when it abruptly withdrew its Proposed Determination after a change in administration. Agency leadership could change again during the pendency of this lawsuit, especially in light of the upcoming November 2024 election. Only by intervening

and gaining the rights of a party can NWF be sure that its interests and those of its members are protected.

13. Throughout changes at the agency, NWF has been a consistent advocate for the protection of Bristol Bay, NWF has devoted over a decade of advocacy to this issue, and maintaining EPA's decision is of great importance to NWF and its members. NWF must be a party to this lawsuit in order to see the effort through to its conclusion.

Pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1746, I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct.

Executed on this \_\_19\_\_ day of April, 2024 in Apex, North Carolina.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jessie Ritter". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above a horizontal line.

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Jessie Ritter